

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY UPDATE
December 30, 2014 - January 8, 2015

1. [President Obama Responds to the Attack in France](#) (01-07-2015)
2. [Inherent Resolve Airstrikes Continue in Syria, Iraq](#) (01-06-2015)
3. [U.S. Military Begins Training Iraqi Forces to Take on ISIL](#) (01-05-2015)
4. [USS Fort Worth Joins Sampson in Search Efforts](#) (01-04-2014)
5. [U.S. Imposes New Sanctions Against North Korean Government](#) (01-02-2015)
6. [U.S. Lists More Individuals, Entities Under Iran Sanctions Orders](#) (12-31-2014)
7. [Defeating ISIL Is Global Challenge, U.S. Envoy Says](#) (12-30-2014)

1. [President Obama Responds to the Attack in France](#) (01-07-2015)**[Statement by the President on the Attack in France](#)**

I strongly condemn the horrific shooting at the offices of Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris that has reportedly killed 12 people. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of this terrorist attack and the people of France at this difficult time. France is America's oldest ally, and has stood shoulder to shoulder with the United States in the fight against terrorists who threaten our shared security and the world. Time and again, the French people have stood up for the universal values that generations of our people have defended. France, and the great city of Paris where this outrageous attack took place, offer the world a timeless example that will endure well beyond the hateful vision of these killers. We are in touch with French officials and I have directed my Administration to provide any assistance needed to help bring these terrorists to justice.

[Remarks by the President on the Terrorist Attack in Paris](#)

THE PRESIDENT: I've reached out to President Hollande of France and hope to have the opportunity to talk to him today. But I thought it was appropriate for me to express my deepest sympathies to the people of Paris and the people of France for the terrible terrorist attack that took place earlier today.

I think that all of us recognize that France is one of our oldest allies, our strongest allies. They have been with us at every moment when we've -- from 9/11 on, in dealing with some of the terrorist organizations around the world that threaten us. For us to see the kind of cowardly evil attacks that

took place today I think reinforces once again why it's so important for us to stand in solidarity with them, just as they stand in solidarity with us.

The fact that this was an attack on journalists, attack on our free press, also underscores the degree to which these terrorists fear freedom -- of speech and freedom of the press. But the one thing that I'm very confident about is that the values that we share with the French people, a belief -- a universal belief in the freedom of expression, is something that can't be silenced because of the senseless violence of the few.

And so our counterterrorism cooperation with France is excellent. We will provide them with every bit of assistance that we can going forward. I think it's going to be important for us to make sure that we recognize these kinds of attacks can happen anywhere in the world. And one of the things I'll be discussing with Secretary Kerry today is to make sure that we remain vigilant not just with respect to Americans living in Paris, but Americans living in Europe and in the Middle East and other parts of the world, and making sure that we stay vigilant in trying to protect them -- and to hunt down and bring the perpetrators of this specific act to justice, and to roll up the networks that help to advance these kinds of plots.

In the end, though, the most important thing I want to say is that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who've been lost in France, and with the people of Paris and the people of France. What that beautiful city represents -- the culture and the civilization that is so central to our imaginations -- that's going to endure. And those who carry out senseless attacks against innocent civilians, ultimately they'll be forgotten. And we will stand with the people of France through this very, very difficult time.

Thank you very much, everybody.

Related Statements:

[Kerry, Polish FM Schetyna on Terrorist Attack in Paris](#)

[DipNote: Attack in France](#)

[Hagel Condemns 'Barbaric' Terrorist Attack in Paris](#)

2. Inherent Resolve Airstrikes Continue in Syria, Iraq (01-06-2015)

From a Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve News Release

SOUTHWEST ASIA, Jan. 6, 2015 – U.S. and partner-nation military forces have continued to attack Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant terrorists in Syria and Iraq, Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve officials reported today.

Officials provided details on airstrikes that occurred between 8 a.m. yesterday and 8 a.m. today, local time, noting that assessments of results are based on initial reports.

Airstrikes in Syria

Fighter and bomber aircraft conducted 10 airstrikes in Syria:

- Near Kobani, eight airstrikes destroyed 13 ISIL fighting positions and an ISIL building and damaged an ISIL building.
- Near Dawr az Zawr, an airstrike destroyed an ISIL bunker.
- Near Raqqa, an airstrike destroyed two ISIL tanks.

Airstrikes in Iraq

Remotely piloted and attack aircraft conducted two airstrikes in Iraq:

- Near Qaim, an airstrike destroyed an ISIL bunker.
- Near Asad, an airstrike destroyed an ISIL tactical unit, an ISIL armored vehicle and an ISIL vehicle and damaged an ISIL vehicle.

Part of Inherent Resolve

The strikes were conducted as part of Operation Inherent Resolve, the operation to eliminate the ISIL terrorist group and the threat they pose to Iraq, the region and the wider international community.

Coalition nations conducting airstrikes in Iraq include the United States, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Coalition nations conducting airstrikes in Syria include the United States, Bahrain, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Related Articles:

[Airstrikes Continue Against ISIL in Syria, Iraq](#) (12-31-2014)

Related Sites:

[Special Report: Operation Inherent Resolve - Targeted Operations Against ISIL Terrorists](#)

3. U.S. Military Begins Training Iraqi Forces to Take on ISIL (01-05-2015)

By Nick Simeone

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5, 2015 – The United States has begun training Iraqi army recruits, a central part of the strategy by the U.S.-led coalition that is working with the Iraqi government to retake territory and ultimately defeat Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant terrorists in the country.

Pentagon spokesman Army Col. Steve Warren told reporters today that six weeks of training began Dec. 27 for four battalions of Iraqi security forces at a base in Taji, north of Baghdad. Training began at Asad Air Base in Anbar province for members of the Iraqi 7th Division several days earlier.

Warren said all of the Iraqis going through the training by U.S. personnel already have been vetted.

Warren said the air base has been the target of “regular indirect enemy fire,” which he said has been wholly ineffective and has drawn no return fire from U.S. forces.

Part of Operation Inherent Resolve

The training mission is part of Operation Inherent Resolve, which -- along with targeted coalition airstrikes being carried in both Iraq and Syria -- is intended to degrade and defeat ISIL terrorists who hold large sections of territory along the countries’ shared border.

About 2,100 U.S. military personnel are in Iraq advising and assisting Iraqi forces and providing protection to U.S. personnel and missions. That figure is expected to grow by as many as 1,300 later this month as part of the expanded U.S. military presence President Barack Obama ordered in November to help Iraq reclaim territory taken by ISIL.

In total, 12 Iraqi brigades are expected to be trained -- nine from the Iraqi security forces and three from the Kurdish peshmerga. Two other locations in Iraq, one in Irbil and another in Besmaya, are expected to host training missions as well.

Related Sites:

[Special Report: Operation Inherent Resolve - Targeted Operations Against ISIL Terrorists](#)

4. USS Fort Worth Joins Sampson in Search Efforts (01-04-2014)

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4, 2015 – The littoral combat ship USS Fort Worth has joined the guided missile destroyer USS Sampson in the Java Sea to assist in the Indonesian-led international search-and-recovery effort for downed AirAsia Flight 8501, according to a U.S. 7th Fleet news release issued yesterday.

This morning the Sampson's commander, Navy Cmdr. Steven M. Foley, discussed current search efforts with ABC's "This Week" weekend news program host Martha Raddatz.

"We've been searching using lookouts, using optical search equipment and scanning the horizon and using our helicopters in tandem to search a wide area," Foley told Raddatz today.

Rough Weather

"The weather has been a little rough with scattered thunderstorms," the commander said. "The seas have been about two to four feet, increasing to about four to six feet when the rain swells come in. And we've been operating in three specified areas that the Indonesian authorities have assigned to us.

"And you have to remember," Foley added, "this is their search effort and we're here to assist."

Ships are being employed to search for the downed aircraft's black box and the helicopters are looking for debris, Foley told Raddatz. Rigid-hull inflatable boats are also participating in the search effort, he added.

The Indonesian government requested U.S. assistance to help in the search for Air Asia Flight 8501, which disappeared Dec. 28 during its route from Surabaya, Indonesia, to Singapore with 162 passengers and crew aboard.

The San Diego-based USS Sampson, an Arleigh Burke-class Aegis guided missile destroyer, was deployed Dec. 29 to assist in the search efforts for the Airbus A320-216 aircraft, according to a U.S. Navy news release. Since then, searchers have found debris and passenger remains from the aircraft, which apparently crashed during its flight during bad weather.

Remains, Debris Found

The Sampson arrived in the Java Sea search area on Dec. 30, according to a U.S. Navy release. Later that day, the Sampson's helicopters and Indonesian navy assets discovered aircraft debris.

The Sampson's crew also removed six remains from the sea Jan. 1 and six others Jan. 2, according to a U.S. Navy release.

"We find great gratification in being able to assist the Indonesian government in this ongoing effort and to bring closure to the family and friends of the passengers of AirAsia Flight 8501," Foley told Raddatz.

Related Sites:

[U.S. 7th Fleet](#)

[USS Sampson](#)

[USS Fort Worth](#)

Related Articles:

[USS Fort Worth joins USS Sampson](#)

[USS Sampson Contributes to AirAsia Search Efforts](#)

[Indonesia Requests U.S. Help in Search for Missing Aircraft](#)

5. U.S. Imposes New Sanctions Against North Korean Government (01-02-2015)

On December 22, 2014, President Obama accused North Korea of "cybervandalism." On January 2, Obama imposed new sanctions.

Washington — In response to the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's numerous provocations, particularly the recent cyberattack targeting Sony Pictures Entertainment and the threats against movie theaters and moviegoers, President Obama signed an executive order January 2 authorizing sanctions against the government of North Korea and the Workers' Party of Korea.

This step reflects the ongoing commitment of the United States to hold North Korea accountable for its destabilizing, destructive and repressive actions, particularly its efforts to undermine U.S. cybersecurity and intimidate U.S. businesses and artists exercising their right of freedom of speech, according to the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Pursuant to the executive order, Treasury immediately has designated three entities and 10 individuals for being agencies or officials of the North Korean government and subject to new sanctions.

"Today's actions are driven by our commitment to hold North Korea accountable for its destructive and destabilizing conduct. Even as the FBI continues its investigation into the cyber-attack against Sony Pictures Entertainment, these steps underscore that we will employ a broad set of tools to defend U.S. businesses and citizens, and to respond to attempts to undermine our values or threaten the national security of the United States," said Secretary of the Treasury Jacob Lew.

"The actions taken today under the authority of the President's new executive order will further isolate key North Korean entities and disrupt the activities of close to a dozen critical North Korean

operatives. We will continue to use this broad and powerful tool to expose the activities of North Korean government officials and entities.”

The executive order aims to escalate financial pressure on the government of North Korea, including its agencies, instrumentalities and controlled entities, by authorizing targeted sanctions that would deny designated persons access to the U.S. financial system and prohibit U.S. persons from engaging in transactions or dealings with them.

Under the executive order, the secretary of the Treasury Department, in consultation with the secretary of state, can apply sanctions against North Korea government officials, the Workers’ Party of Korea officials, and persons and entities determined to be owned or controlled by, or acting for or on behalf of, or to have provided material support for the government of North Korea, Workers’ Party of Korea or any other person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

The following three entities are designated as controlled entities of the government of North Korea:

- The Reconnaissance General Bureau (RGB) is North Korea’s primary intelligence organization and is involved in a range of activities, including conventional arms trade proscribed by numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions. Many of North Korea’s major cyberoperations run through RGB.
- Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation (KOMID) is North Korea’s primary arms dealer and main exporter of goods and equipment related to ballistic missiles and conventional weapons. KOMID has offices in countries around the world and facilitates weapons sales for the North Korean government.
- Korea Tangu Trading Corporation is subordinate to the Second Academy of Natural Sciences and is primarily responsible for the procurement of commodities and technologies to support North Korea's defense research and development programs, including materials that are controlled under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) or the Australia Group.

The following 10 individuals are also designated under President Obama’s January 2 executive order:

- Kil Jong Hun and Kim Kwang Yon are officials of the North Korean government and represent the southern Africa interests of KOMID. Kil Jong Hun is KOMID’s representative in Namibia and an official of the North Korean government.
- Jang Song Chol is a KOMID representative in Russia and an official of the North Korean government. He is working with individuals in Sudan who are procuring materials from him.
- Yu Kwang Ho is an official of the North Korean government.
- Kim Yong Chol is a KOMID representative in Iran and an official of the North Korean government.
- Jang Yong Son is a KOMID representative in Iran and an official of the North Korean government.

- Kim Kyu is the KOMID external affairs officer and an official of the North Korean government.
- Ryu Jin and Kang Ryong are KOMID officials operating in Syria and are officials of the North Korean government.
- Kim Kwang Chun is a Korea Tangun Trading Corporation representative in Shenyang, China, and an official of the North Korean government.

Related Sites:

[White House](#)

[Executive Order](#)

6. U.S. Lists More Individuals, Entities Under Iran Sanctions Orders (12-31-2014)

Washington — The U.S. Treasury Department has designated nine individuals and entities under various existing Iran-related authorities for their support of the Iranian government's sanctions evasion efforts and human rights-related abusers, including those engaged in censorship.

Separately, Treasury updated information related to 30 vessels blocked for their affiliation with the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) under nonproliferation sanctions.

In announcing the designations on its website December 30, Treasury said the actions reflect the United States' continued commitment to enforce existing sanctions while China, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, Russia and Germany (known as the P5+1) seek to negotiate a comprehensive solution with Iran to address the international community's concerns over Iran's nuclear program.

"Although we do not support the imposition of any new nuclear-related sanctions while negotiations are ongoing ... we have made clear, by word and deed, that we will continue to enforce our existing sanctions. Today's actions underscore this commitment," said Treasury Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David S. Cohen.

Treasury designated the following five individuals and one entity under Executive Order 13622 for materially assisting, sponsoring or providing financial, material or technological support for the purchase or acquisition of U.S. bank notes by the government of Iran: Hossein Zeidi, Seyed Kamal Yasini, Azizullah Asadullah Qulandary, Asadollah Seifi, Teymour Ameri and Belfast General Trading.

The Iranian government contracted with Zeidi and Yasini, Treasury said, to convert Iranian funds denominated in non-Iranian local currency into U.S. dollars. "To date, these individuals and their network have effected the delivery of hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. dollar bank notes to the Iranian government in violation of E.O. 13622," Treasury said.

Zeidi, based in the United Arab Emirates, was responsible for converting foreign currency into U.S. bank notes, and Yasini facilitated the delivery of U.S. bank notes to the Iranian government, Treasury said.

Afghan national Qulandary worked with Yasini to convert Iranian government funds into U.S. dollars and deliver these bank notes to the Iranian government, according to the department.

Qulandary, Yasini and Belfast General Trading collaborated to deliver U.S. bank notes to Iran, Treasury added. "To date, Belfast General Trading has converted over \$250 million, and Qulandary has dispatched couriers to hand carry this money to Tehran," Treasury said.

Since mid-2014, Seifi and Ameri have each delivered hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. bank notes to the Iranian government in contravention of the executive order, the department said.

Additionally, Asia Bank official Anahita Nasirbeik is being designated for materially assisting, sponsoring or providing financial, material or technological support for, or goods and services in support of, the Central Bank of Iran, or the purchase or acquisition of U.S. bank notes by the Iranian government.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

Iranian information technology firm Douran Software Technologies is being designated under E.O. 13628, which targets censorship or other activities that limit the freedom of expression or assembly of the Iranian people since the June 2009 election.

The company acted on behalf of the Committee to Determine Instances of Criminal Content, which was previously designated under E.O. 13628, in connection with the filtering of prohibited Web pages. Douran Software Technologies is one of the main vendors for an Iranian government project to monitor computer activity, Treasury added.

Iranian company Abysssec is being designated under E.O. 13553 for providing support to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which was designated under E.O. 13553 in June 2011 for committing serious human rights abuses. Abysssec was used by the IRGC to train its employees in cybertradecraft and to develop offensive information operations capabilities. Abysssec was considered a critical component of the IRGC's cyberprogram, Treasury said.

Treasury also updated the names and flagging information of 30 vessels affiliated with IRISL that are already identified on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List under an order that targets proliferators of weapons of mass destruction and their supporters.

[More information](#) on the designations is available on the [Treasury website](#).

7. Defeating ISIL Is Global Challenge, U.S. Envoy Says (12-30-2014)

This commentary by General John Allen, U.S. special envoy to the global coalition to counter ISIL, was published in the December 29 online version of DefenseNews.

Degrading and Defeating ISIL **by General John Allen**

In early June of this year, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) fighters poured down the Tigris Valley. Multiple cities fell. The northern approaches to Baghdad were exposed to ISIL. Iraq was under siege, poorly governed and alone in the world.

Six months later, and less than three months since the president called for an international effort against ISIL and I was appointed special envoy to the global coalition to counter ISIL, 60 nations met in Brussels on December 3 to demonstrate their shared commitment to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL. It is an expression of the threat ISIL poses to global security that so many partners

came together so quickly to confront this emergency. It is also a powerful testament to the importance of American leadership. No other nation could bring together such a diverse coalition to tackle a challenge this complex like the United States.

At this first ministerial-level meeting in Brussels, the Iraqi government also demonstrated its commitment to becoming a more proactive partner in the fight against ISIL. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi updated the coalition on the unity government's efforts to take important steps to benefit all Iraqis, including efforts to implement significant judicial-sector reforms, and to root out decay and corruption in Iraq's security apparatus. Indeed, in recent weeks, Abadi removed two dozen generals and publicly disclosed the results of a government-sponsored investigation revealing thousands of ghost soldiers on the Iraqi military's rolls. And just days before we met in Brussels, Baghdad signed a critical oil deal with the Kurds on revenue management and oil exports.

Iraq's continued progress toward reform and inclusiveness will be imperative to the coalition's success. There was recognition in Brussels, however, that ISIL is not solely an Iraqi problem. Nor is it solely a Syrian problem. ISIL is an international problem and demands a sustained international response.

Under U.S. leadership, the coalition is responding to the global threat posed by ISIL with a coordinated global effort. So far, eight coalition partners are taking part in airstrikes over Iraq. Six nations are participating in strikes in Syria. As of early December, there have been more than 1,200 strikes against ISIL targets. And each time we have coordinated coalition air support with Iraqi forces on the ground, ISIL's momentum has been halted and it is now constantly looking over its shoulder for the next attack.

While the immediate focus remains to degrade and defeat ISIL in Iraq, we and coalition partners will continue to strike at ISIL in Syria to deny them safe haven and to disrupt their ability to project power. We are having an impact in Syria; we have struck at ISIL's command-and-control nodes, supply lines, fighters and leaders, and military and economic infrastructure and resources in Syria. We have also debilitated ISIL's oil producing, processing and transportation infrastructure. This is critical given that the smuggling and sale of oil provides ISIL with as much as \$1 million per day.

Of course, we cannot hope to defeat ISIL through military action alone. Coalition partners are now in leading roles to stop the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, to limit ISIL's financing, and to defeat ISIL where it can do incredible harm: in the virtual space and marketplace of ideas. Nations as diverse as Morocco, Germany and Kuwait have helped to steer these efforts. And when millions of men, women and children have been displaced by ISIL's barbarism, dozens of nations have stepped up to make significant humanitarian contributions, and will continue to need to do so, in order for the region to regain stability and for innocent civilians affected by conflict to regain hope for the future.

Across each of these lines of effort, the coalition's ultimate success against ISIL will depend on our commitment, our creativity and our coordination. We also cannot truly defeat ISIL for the long term if we do not use this unique moment in history to take action as a community of nations to address the underlying political, economic and social issues that have allowed ISIL's toxic and destructive ideology to flourish.

This is an ambitious task and generational work. But we take on this challenge with a growing and diverse coalition of partners. If we can remain united in this common effort both to defeat ISIL and to lay the foundations for a more stable Middle East, we will have left a legacy that is far more powerful than the defeat of one intolerant and nihilistic group of terrorists. We will have laid the foundation for a world that is more tolerant, more secure and more prosperous.